
Frinton Residents' Association

NOTES of a Half-Yearly Meeting held in the McGrigor Hall on 20 October 2018 at 10:00 AM

Present: The President, Chairman, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer, and 4 other Committee members, 5 speakers, 5 other guests including the local MP, Councillors and a PCSO, together with 101 Association members, and 21 Non-Members/Friends making a total of 140 attendees.

1 INTRODUCTION

After explaining the location of the emergency exits, etc, and the information that was available at the back of the room, the Chairman introduced the local MP, Councillor Giles Watling, together with Councillors Mark Platt, Pamela Walford, Terry Allen and Robert Bucke.

The Chairman then reviewed recent Committee activities as follows:

"We continue to attend Town Council meetings and the Recreational & Amenities meetings in the Town offices. Committee member Michael Talbot is taking on much of this activity and also gradually taking on more and more queries on Planning issues as well as looking at the pavement and pothole problems raised. We have also attended public enquiries on planning applications at District to try and help our Town's cause.

We have championed the cause of The Spinney and urged the Town Council to improve it. We think we have contributed 'a little' to kick-starting the project that you will hear about later from Councillor Terry Allen.

We continue to give some financial support to Frinton in Bloom, and also to the recent good work completed on Gun Gardens. You will hear later from David Foster of the many actions undertaken and successes for the Town, including those in this year's Anglia in Bloom competition.

For some while, we have been helping to advise horse owners about the regulations on using the beach area of Frinton by designing and handing out a simple, polite card. This has proved to be helpful.

This year, TDC have encouraged dog walkers to use Tending beaches, which we support, but no authority seems to want to do anything about enforcing the regulations in some areas which are there to protect other beach users from what could be nuisance dogs, particularly in the Summer season. We have reacted to complaints about dogs on the beach and this year have produced a card that helps to point to dog owners, the regulations and restrictions for dogs. Again, a simple and polite card. This has proved to be working and has been praised by at least two of our District Councillors. We don't think these sort of actions should necessarily be carried out by our organisation, but we think our actions are helping our Town.

Elaine Rowland who, unfortunately, cannot be with us today, continues to help our Treasurer and her Tree Warden activities continue to help this Town maintain as many of its trees as possible; a key feature of so many of our avenues and roads.

We have lobbied the Town Council for sometime to takeover the toilet building in Old Way and run them for Frinton residents and the many visitors who come to our lovely Town. The Town council now have details of how they could further this cause and it is a current consideration on the Council's Agenda. We have been given a timescale of 2019.

Health continues to be a major concern for many of us, and our Vice Chairman, Neil Churcher, is also chairman of the Patient Participation Group at Caradoc Surgery. He has had a very

busy and difficult year representing patients' interests during a very difficult period of change. We support Neil and also sympathise, as he has had an almost impossible task. He has also dealt with a number of other issues for our organisation and has pushed much of our publicity in the press in recent months.

Because of smaller numbers on our Committee, we have had to share jobs out as best we can at times, and this meant bigger loads on some Committee members. Ken Daniels has taken on Membership Secretary duties, but that has taken some time away from the work he has been doing on monitoring pothole and pavement problems. And, of course, talking of taking on extra duties, I have to mention our Secretary, Jeanette Phillips. She has been a stalwart of our Committee and has continued to do an amazing amount of administration and secretarial work, as well as maintaining our website, and has overseen, once again, the production of our recent newsletter and such routine things as organising much of this meeting. Behind all this, we continue to have the sterling work put in by our Treasurer, Geoff Harris. Thanks to him and of course, our President, Gillian Sanford. In fact, thank you to all our Committee members for the work they have put in, and if I haven't mentioned you by name, I apologise.

I have to announce that we have recently had two further resignations from our Committee; Eleanor Young has not been with us that long, but is finding it difficult to be effective as she spends much time overseas. But perhaps the most significant resignation is that of Jeanette Phillips who has given us notice that she wants to leave at the end of this year. Jeanette has been on our Committee for 12 years and has always been at the heart of our activities. She has been Secretary to four Chairpersons and has always been prepared to take on many extra activities. I mentioned earlier some of her present activities, but perhaps what my words can't show is the level of professionalism and attention to detail she has brought to our organisation. Jeanette, we are going to miss you so much, but thank you for all you have done for Frinton Residents throughout your role on this Committee."

The President then said a few words and presented the Honorary Secretary with a bouquet of flowers. Jeanette Phillips then thanked everyone, said that she had enjoyed her time on the FRA Committee and would miss everyone. However, she still intended to attend public meetings.

The Chairman then continued his review:

"Of course, publicity has been important in the last few months and most of you will, no doubt, have seen our plea for extra Committee volunteers. We knew Jeanette wanted to leave and please don't interpret the press releases as panic, but we needed to get home the message.

It is not unusual for clubs and voluntary organisations to have difficulties in finding volunteers to undertake Committee work - it has been a constant problem for us over the years. So I'm pleased to announce that we have had a good response to our advertising and strong press releases asking for extra help. We are hopeful that we will be able to fill most of the positions, albeit we may have to juggle things around slightly. However, you never know for sure in this life so please don't let my words put you off from talking to me about joining our Committee as we still want your help for our Town."

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Councillors Anne Davis, Iris Johnson, Nick Turner, Vanda Watling, and Fiona and Jack Robertson, together with Committee Members Richard Fletcher, Neil Churcher, Elaine Rowland and Jane Northover, and FRA Members Kay Carswell, Mr and Mrs P M Henry, Peter Dias and Gail Evans. Secretary's Note: Other Councillors who had been invited to the meeting included Laurie Gray and Linda Allen.

3 RAIL SERVICES

The Chairman introduced Alan Neville (AN), Abellio Community and Customer Engagement

Manager, who would be providing a presentation entitled a "Greater Anglia Update".

AN stated that he was pleased to come to Frinton again and that he was amazed at the turn out at the meeting. He had been working on the railway for 38.5 years, and in 1983 had arrived in this area from the North-West. He had gone into Management in the late 1990s, had undertaken various customer service roles, including managing London Liverpool Street Station. He was hoping that there would be lots of questions at the end of his presentation, which he would be pleased to answer. He stated that Abellio took over the franchise in late 2016 with promises of revolutionary things that were now coming about. He felt that they would be making a big difference in East Anglia. The first new trains would be arriving from Switzerland in three to four weeks' time, after being exhibited in Berlin. He was very excited by this as it would result in big improvements in customer service and big improvements to stations.

AN then covered the information reported on the slides as follows:

1. Greater Anglia performance and fleet update

* Performance rather mixed with an annual PPM MAA now being 88.43% which is above national average, but not as high as hoped due to the impact of heat-related issues and infrastructure faults

Secretary's Note:

PPM = Public Performance Measure which shows the percentage of trains that ran their entire planned journey calling at all scheduled stops and arriving at their terminating station within five minutes of time due.

MAA = Moving Annual Average of the PPM, ie a twelve-month sliding window of PPM

* Actions with regard to fleet reliability (eg Class 317 availability) and those undertaken with Network Rail had resulted in positive signs of progress

* Some challenges had been experienced with short formations, primarily due to issues with the 'Renatus' refurbished Class 321s, but a recovery plan was in place that was delivering improvements

* Current fleet upgrades/refurbishments were progressing well, including Class 317 reliability schemes and new wheel slip protection systems for Class 153 diesel trains.

2. Greater Anglia customer service and commercial update

* Personnel changes had been made and Martin Moran was now responsible for commercial and customer service operations, allowing Andrew Goodrum to lead Business Readiness for the introduction of new trains which were being built in Derby as well as in Switzerland. The feedback had been overwhelming positive throughout all the stages - in particular people loved the new seats

* Ticket vending machines were being installed at rural stations in Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire, as well as in Essex

* Over 1300 additional seats were being installed at stations at the request of the public

* Smart ticketing roll out was continuing

* A new DR15 proposal (Repayments to be made to customers after more than 15 minutes' delay) had been put to the Department for Transport – the signs were encouraging, but approval and sign-off were still awaited

* NRPS (National Rail Passenger Survey) had been affected by the Beast from the East

- * The new Travel Team were continuing to engage with customers at key stations on the network, providing assistance.
- * A new integrated rail/bus ticket had been launched for the journey from Saxmundham to Aldeburgh
- * The Community Rail Partnerships had run a successful series of summer event trains, including celebrating the Bittern Line 21st anniversary and continuing the Lowestoft station project
- * More station adopters had been recruited – now 93 stations had been adopted with over 200 adopters helping out. In Frinton, the station adopters were very active and doing a marvellous job.
- * A new secure bike subscription service had commenced at Chelmsford station to meet the high demand.

3. Greater Anglia asset management update

- * New customer information screen installation programme was well underway
- * LED lighting had been installed at over 80 stations since last December, with more energy efficient bulbs at an additional 24 stations.
- * Good progress was being made with station painting and deep clean programmes
- * Footbridge refurbishments were now complete at Rayleigh and Rochford
- * Water fountains had been installed at Chelmsford, Ipswich and Cambridge stations; these were proving to be very popular, particularly at Ipswich

4. New trains update

- * The first Stadler train was currently undergoing testing in Romania, with further testing planned in the Czech Republic. The NEAT (New East Anglia Trains) Programme was progressing well.
- * A group of disabled rail passengers had recently been taken to Switzerland to show them the accessible features on the Stadler trains and to test the prototype ramps; the feedback was overwhelmingly positive
- * Bombardier were making good progress with the manufacture of the Aventra trains.
- * Ilford and Norwich Crown Point upgrades were well underway
- * InnoTrans (the International Trade Fair for Transport Technology) and the first Stadler train to the UK were the next milestones this Autumn
- * Stabling, light maintenance, wheel lathe and controlled emission toilets cleaning plans were still being finalised, although a deal has been confirmed with Mid-Norfolk Railway to expand their facilities to store bi-mode trains, during the transition period when trains were being phased in; this arrangement has been well-received in that location.
- * Training for engineers and maintenance teams was underway
- * Station platform alterations were also being finalised

* Roll out for timetable improvements enabled by the new trains was now under review in the light of the May 2018 timetable issues experienced elsewhere on the UK network

The following questions (Q) were then answered (A) by AN:

Q: You have not mentioned the proposed timetable re-write. When will the consultation start?

A: This is out of our immediate control at present. I cannot honestly state at the moment when the consultation will start, but your group (ONTRACK) will be amongst the first to be consulted. The national picture has changed dramatically this year with regard to timetable introductions.

Q: In this area, over 32% of the population are over 65 and we like to talk to people. I want to be assured that we can still do that. Are you going to keep that option available?

A: The new ticket machines will be "Card Only". However, we have introduced ViTA (Virtual Ticket Agent) onto our machines to enable people to speak to someone based in Norwich, who works on a 24/7 basis. This will allow people to speak to a human being who can take control of the machine remotely. Earlier this year we did close some very lightly-used ticket offices and the staff are now employed as roving hosts, assisting customers who have told us that they wish to see people outside, providing information and answering queries. There are no plans to close any more ticket offices.

Q: If you press a button on the machine you can speak to a person, but the case is that even though you can do this, it is considerably more expensive to buy the ticket they suggest than that recommended by a person in a ticket office. Do you intend to do away with this anomaly?

A: Our revenue and costs are totally under control. First of all, there is a button on the machine which is a cheap fares' button. There were several days recently when there were problems with staffing at the Frinton Ticket Office mainly due to staff vacancies and sickness. We also had to rebuild the computer in the Frinton Ticket Office, which took longer than expected. There are still just a few tickets which are not on the machines that are available in the Ticket Office. We will improve and enhance the number of tickets available on the machine. It is a continuing process.

Q: Will the new trains be quicker to London Liverpool Street?

A: Our timetable planners are working out the service at the moment, ie whether or not we will be able to improve journey times. Certainly, on the Norwich to London route, there will be an enhanced service. Overall there will be an improvement.

Q: Are you just talking about the level of improvements, or getting the journey time down from 90 minutes to 60 minutes.

A: I have no details on other lines as yet.

Q: Recently, my wife was travelling on a train that was running late. When the Ticket Inspector went through she asked him if the connecting train at Thorpe-Le-Soken would be held. When she got to Colchester, she also asked the guard, who stated that he did not know, but would ask the guard on the train in front. She was then told that it would not be held to meet the train she was on. There was plenty of time for a message to go through to hold that train and nothing was done. I think this is diabolical customer service.

A: Obviously, I am happy to talk to you after the meeting and I am sorry about the problems experienced on this journey. Ultimately, it is not possible to hold all trains all the time. The decision is taken by Control, who have to consider how this will affect most people. There will unfortunately be a case of short term pain for long term gain. Control make the decision in

conjunction with signallers and controllers having to take that whole route in mind in order to keep performance going.

Q: Can you categorically assure us that Frinton Station will not be closed? It is in a state of disrepair as you are not maintaining the station buildings. Can you tell me why on the amazing new rolling stock, sockets (for recharging electronic devices) have now been blanked off.

A: We have some issues with the Renatus Class and we are taking this problem to a very high level as it irritates everyone. There are several things that are wrong with these units and we are in discussion with those who refurbished them. The new trains will have sockets. As far as the station building is concerned, we have wonderful station adopters and the Asset Management Team will be looking after the station building. I have seen that the sills are rotten and there is a real problem with regard to repair. A plan might already be in place as we value that building very much.

The Chairman thanked AN for an interesting presentation.

4 HEALTH

The Chairman then introduced Michelle Bhen (MB) and Steve Colmer (SC) of the East of England Ambulance Service (EEAS), who would be providing a presentation entitled "Stay Well this Winter".

SC thanked the FRA for the opportunity to speak to this meeting and pointed out that the last time he was in Frinton had been 19 years ago to introduce the concept of air ambulances. He was celebrating his 29th Anniversary of working for the Ambulance Service today. MB explained that she had been working in the Ambulance Service for 19 years, but was new to her post in North Essex. Both then explained their backgrounds and responsibilities, and reported how the services had merged to become an Ambulance Service Trust that stretched from Luton to Canvey Island, ie

"The East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust now covered the six counties of Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, and Essex, has three emergency operations' centres (call centres) in Bedford, Norwich and Chelmsford (meaning that calls may be answered by people without local knowledge), and an RCC (Regional Control Centre) in Essex."

SC reported that 2017 had seen the introduction of a revised Ambulance Response Programme, involving new prioritisation and more appropriate responses for each condition, which in some instances could be the provision of telephone advice. He then pointed out what currently happens when callers dial 999, ie

- a call handler answers and checks the reason for calling, the caller's telephone number and the address of the incident; the first thing they will ask is if the patient is breathing and awake.
- depending on the reason for the call, the call handler will either provide immediate help to the caller, or ask a set of questions to obtain further information.

NB: As these details are being taken, the information appears on screens in front of dispatchers, who will assign the response to that call. The questions do not delay help being arranged, but do help make sure the correct help is provided.

- at the end of the telephone assessment, the call is given a category based on the information given by the caller. The call handler may stay on the line, offering further practical help and advice where necessary. The categories are:

Category 1 (7-15 minutes' response time) - immediately life-threatening injury or illness such

as cardiac arrest, traumatic serious injury, severe allergic reaction;

Category 2 (18-40 minutes' response time) - emergency such as acute breathing problems, stroke/CVA (cerebrovascular accident), chest pain, fitting/convulsions;

Category 3 (120 minutes' response time) - urgent calls such as assaults, falls, minor injuries;

Category 4 (180 minutes' response time) - less urgent calls such as vomiting, fevers, nose bleeds, etc.

SC explained that the Emergency Clinical Advice and Triage (ECAT) Centre was staffed by paramedics, nurses or emergency care practitioners who can make further clinical assessments for less seriously ill patients in order to establish the best care. This could lead to a referral to a better source of help for their needs, such as a GP, a walk-in centre, a midwife, another healthcare professional, or even self help, but an on-scene response would be sent to anybody who needed it.

SC then covered how to get the best out of the health care system, the challenges involved and how important it was for people to take responsibility for themselves. Slides covered public health campaigns such as:

PREPARE FOR WINTER - Be aware of what services and help are available, take care and stay safe. In order to "Stay well this Winter", consider

(i) Prevention: have an Annual Health Check, keep warm, have regular meals and plenty of fluids. SC pointed out that dehydration accounted for a lot of admissions to hospital, especially among the elderly.

(ii) Protecting yourself, your family and other patients by getting your flu jab now. All ambulance crews had flu jabs, and SC pointed out the importance of other common sense precautions such as preparation (keeping a stock of common cold remedies and routine medications - take them on time and try not to miss a dose, take medicines for illnesses as prescribed and don't stop because you feel better).

(iii) Potential Dangers such as trip hazards around the house, good lighting especially on steps and landings. SC explained that North Essex Early Intervention Team staffed by clinicians from the Ambulance Service provided advice to those in danger of falls in the home and could order zimmer frames, etc. Good feedback had been received on this service, but they needed to be used a bit more. They worked on Category 3 and 4 calls, and dealt with people who had fallen and could not get up.

SC recommended asking for help as early as possible, and what you should do while waiting for help. He explained the alternative options available such as visiting a GP, a pharmacy (as pharmacists are able to advise on medication, SC suggested that people should go to see them), a walk-in centre, or using Careline alarms (Careline are working for Tendring and the CCG are funding and trialling these alarms), and finally, ringing 111 or 999.

He pointed out that 111 should be dialled when it's less urgent than 999, ie If you don't know whether or not to go to hospital, If you don't know who to call, your GP surgery is closed, you need medical advice or reassurance.

With regard to calling 999, it was recommended that people don't wait if it is a Life-threatening situation, a very serious emergency, a serious accident, or if you feel you need emergency hospital treatment. SC pointed out that on average each person will need to call 999 once in seven years. It was appreciated that people were nervous, and it might appear as though the call handlers were asking stupid questions, but they need to know the symptoms.

What the ambulance crew need to know?

- * Your exact address
- * Your telephone number (even though every landline number automatically comes up with an address)
- * Any nearby landmarks that will help them get to you more quickly
- * Exactly what symptoms you have and when they started

SC suggested that the following needed to be considered:

(i) Access - Can we find you easily? Do you have a large clear door number? Can the ambulance crew get in (door on latch)? Is the path clear? If you have a key safe, tell us the number. Any pets? If you call at night, ie during the hours of darkness, SC recommended that the house was well lit, possibly with a car on the drive flashing its hazard warning lights, or a person standing outside directing the ambulance crew.

(ii) Information - Can we find information about you easily when we come to your home, ie your medications: Can we find medical information quickly, especially if you suffer from allergies? (A message in a bottle kept in the fridge is ideal if it kept up-to-date). What about medical history? Who would you like us to contact?

SC then described a new scheme that was starting in November - an area Intervention Team manned solely by a specialist paramedic. Three of these would be hitting the streets shortly, and it could be one of these clinicians who telephone you back after you have made a 999 call.

It was noted that there were First Responder Schemes in Brightlingsea and Clacton, but it was not known if there was one based in Frinton. SC agreed to look into this as these people might be able to get to areas that the ambulance crew could not reach so quickly.

The following questions (Q) were then answered (A) by MB and SC:

Q: One thing I would like to point out is that the information given to the call handlers is only as good as the person making the call. Call handlers have to ask the right questions because people do not explain themselves when they are under stress. He reported on a situation at Frinton Tennis Club when someone had fallen on their head and this was not explained to the call handler, resulting in the call receiving less priority than it should have done. He felt that the issue was to get people to say the right thing.

A: The system we are using is constantly being upgraded and it is a national system. It is a system that more or less only requires yes/no answers. Head injuries are measured on the level of consciousness. Callers should call back if the situation changes. All call handlers are audited to make sure that they interpret calls correctly.

Q: Thank you for the brilliant work you do. Last year, when there was a flu virus/epidemic, the Ambulance Service did not have sufficient cover. Are you going to be able to cover such a situation this year?

A (SC): We have spent a huge amount of time this week working on this. We have some days where we are paying out over 1,000 patient hours when we are only commissioned for 850. Office staff will be going out on shifts, and we will be maximising patient-facing hours.

A (MB): We are working on full-manning hours and looking at coverage for the winter period. Constant recruitment is taking place and 130 new students are coming out onto the road. It is a struggle to recruit and retain, but it is top of our list.

Q: It is a shame that Neil Churcher (Chairman of Caradoc PPG) is not here as he is printing false figures (on telephone answering times at the hub) in the magazine.

Chairman's Note: With their approval, Neil Churcher publishes figures provided by ACE and there is no evidence that they are incorrect.

As there were no further questions, the Chairman thanked SC and MB for their presentation.

5 THE SPINNEY

Next the Chairman (Alan Eldret (AE)) introduced Councillor Terry Allen (TA) who was going to outline the proposals to improve The Spinney.

First of all, TA explained where The Spinney was located: opposite the exit from Frinton Station, between the car park and Wittonwood Road. He pointed out that it was a small area of trees and bushes that voluntary organisations had worked on in the past. Then Essex Wildlife Trust (EWT) took it over some time ago. AE had asked questions at the Town Council Recreation and Amenities meetings regarding whether something could be done to improve it as it did not create a good first impression of our town for those arriving by train. TA had then been tasked to look into it as it was an important Gateway to the Town.

The first slide that appeared onscreen showed how the area had looked in the past, ie it had been an open area with just a few large trees and low bushes. TA then showed a drawing that had resulted from a survey carried out by EWT who then undertook a cutting-down exercise.

TA reported that he had spoken with a local architect, Graham MacNamara, suggesting the areas to be opened up with a gate (onto the site) from the station and another coming out into the town. Landscape Architect, Paul Baines, had also supplied advice stating that people could use it as a walk through. Meetings then took place with local organisations (Frinton In Bloom, Frinton & Walton Heritage Trust and Frinton Residents' Association) in order to ascertain their views, and it was agreed that some trees would be kept. Tender documents had now been sent out for return in two weeks' time.

TA stressed that the refurbishment of this area was going to happen, and the only things to be taken out of the site would be what was not needed there.

The next two slides showed the proposed layout with the pathway edged by bushes and two circular areas with 4-8 benches for seating, that could possibly be sponsored. The site would be surrounded by 1.2 metre high roll-top fencing, and pillars would support the gates at each end as shown. Resin-flat surfaces with block paving would be edged with concrete. There would be plenty of sight lines so that people could not hide away in there, and there would be planting in the ditch and around the seating areas; approximately 9,000 plants would provide massive colour. TA stated that he intended to speak to local schools regarding producing 'bug hotels' to encourage 'creepy crawlies'.

The two slides that followed provided more detail of the circular seating areas and the planting plan. The next slide showed a bird bath and sun dial that TA explained were on the 'wish list', and the final slide provided examples of block paving, gate posts (brickwork) and fencing.

TA explained that the gates would be locked at night to enable enforcement if the site was mis-used, and he hoped that everyone would be pleased with the final result.

AE stated that it looked interesting and thanked TA for providing information about the future of the site.

The following questions (Q) were then answered (A) by TA:

Q: I am disappointed that in the consultation no-one has asked anyone who lives around the area, as it is not the same for the people who live opposite. Fences and lockable gates. Who is going to lock it and who is going to enforce it? Youngsters gather outside the station. This could be the perfect place for them. What is wrong with a bit of nature in Frinton? I do not think that people will care what you do with the area. What about other things that need attention? The money could be more beneficially used elsewhere.

A: This is a project for the whole town - for the hundreds of people who pay their Council Tax. They will see something nice when they come out of the station, as will the visitors to the town. If you worry about things being broken, or how they will be used, nothing will ever get done.

The Chairman explained that there was a planning process, and objections could be submitted. He added that there were lots of gardens around the area which are a credit to the town, and everyone was entitled to their opinion.

TA continued by saying that the Town Council would be manning the toilet block (in Old Way) and the people who open and close that building would be same people as those who opened and closed the Spinney. If it is fenced then PCSOs can then go in and carry out enforcement. At present, anyone can do anything in there. Other issues, such as potholes are an ECC matter, and this is a Town Council issue that we can sort. It is a project for the many, not the few.

Q: Crescent Gardens does not have fencing. Why can't the Spinney have a natural border? Even with fencing, youngsters will still get in. No gates should reduce the teenage involvement.

A: We want the area to be kept nice. It is different to Crescent Gardens which is an open area that is overlooked. As I said, if it is fenced, enforcement can be carried out.

Q: What sort of budget are you considering? Have TDC been asked to tender? Does it have to be such an extravagant, decorative garden?

A: It is out for tender at the moment so I cannot say what amount of money is involved. We have a budget that has been worked out by professionals. This is a one-off chance to do something, ie to make the Gateway to our town look special. We did put feelers out to TDC, asking for their support. However, it is a Town Council project.

Q: If you are trying to encourage parents and children to sit there, my concern is about the safety. Traffic comes round from Connaught Avenue (into Wittonwood Road) at quite a speed.

A: I will take this comment on board, but play equipment is not being installed there and it has not been designed as a play area, just a quiet, relaxing place for people to sit.

The Chairman (AE) explained that the reason the FRA raised this subject and put it on today's Agenda was to keep people informed. He suggested that, by all means, people could continue discussions and ask Councillors questions after the meeting. Also, notes (comments) could be sent to the FRA to pass onto TA. He then thanked TA for speaking to the meeting.

6 FRINTON IN BLOOM

The Chairman then introduced the final speaker, David Foster (DF), Chairman of Frinton in Bloom (FiB).

DF announced that once again Frinton had been awarded Best Small Town in the six counties, in the Anglia in Bloom competition. He then showed slides with the judges visiting different parts of the town: Station Cottage Gardens, with Frinton Primary School pupils and with Tendring Technology College (TTC) students.

DF explained that as a voluntary organisation, FiB could not get involved (in this competition) without support, and they had received 25 years of support from the Frinton Residents' Association (FRA), Frinton & Walton Heritage Trust (FWHT), the Town Council, Tendring District Council, local schools and churches. It was a team effort. He added that they did visit various schools and had taken the judges on a five-mile journey around the area. However, he stressed that it was not just about horticulture, but also about the community. Over the years, the level of enthusiasm exhibited by the children at Frinton Primary has swelled; now one third of the school children were involved in the gardening club. With TTC students, it was all about making clothes from environmentally-friendly materials.

As a slide appeared onscreen, DF pointed out that the new location for the Frinton Gates had been adopted by FWHT who had refurbished them, adding that "we try to preserve and protect everything we can save".

As a picture of Frinton Station platform came up onscreen, DF reported that there had been people volunteering as station adopters for 25 years, or more, and that those now undertaking the task were very enthusiastic. There were murals produced by a graffiti artist and planters, all adding to the fun element of using a redundant platform.

The picture of a pond showed the Eco Project undertaken at TTC, which was completely environmentally-friendly and natural. This was for the students and the FRA had helped with funding. Now it was self-supporting.

A picture then displayed flower beds at the entrance to Luff House, where they were building new homes and landscaping the gardens in order to help the residents enjoy their area.

There were two slides showing the Triangle Shopping Centre decorated with floral arrangements and DF explained how the businesses there wanted to be more and more involved. They had exceeded expectations by a mile, and the Centre was now a visitor attraction. However, it had taken a lot of effort and money to achieve.

DF pointed out that Crescent Gardens covered half an acre. In one flowerbed, FiB had found a way to encourage the children to have an edible garden, and they also held bird watching events with the children in the Gardens in order to set them an example and inspire them. Two other slides showed the judges and TDC gardeners in Crescent Gardens, and then there was one with a beautiful bed full of enormous yellow and orange marigolds, plus others displaying beds full of yellow and white tulips. DF added that the plants had come from Wisbech. DF also explained how FiB had been asked by the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) to create a garden at Tatton Park and one bed in Crescent Gardens had been replanted to recognise that achievement. With the help of TDC, Crescent Gardens was one of the many 'jewels in the crown' of Frinton. It had been designed as a relaxing area, with a lot of open space overlooked by many houses. Another shot showed a wild flower area situated behind fir trees.

Three slides showed pictures taken during the dedication and unveiling of the memorial in Gun Gardens earlier in the year. DF pointed out that Mr and Mrs Stone had improved the rockery and now there was an information board there, which would help people to understand how the garden came about. DF added that he understood the gun had been taken away during WWII. Also, as some might have seen in the Press recently, the telephone box located there, was now standing up straight.

The following slide showed a group of people with the Mayor holding the shield (this year's award from Anglia in Bloom) and DF pointed that within the group were people who had been volunteering with FiB for many years and some were now in their 80s. There were also slides showing the beds at the entrance to the town, more in the Station Cottage Garden and others around the town.

Then there were two pictures of the Walings Rockery. DF explained that it had been decided to do something with this area because it had been in need of a lot of tidying up. Now it had developed into a lovely garden. It was one of many small areas where FiB were trying to work with TDC and this scheme had worked.

Next came a shot of the Jubilee Fountain in the Jubilee Gardens that had been part of the FEAC (Frinton Environmental Action Committee) project in 1996-2002, which had included the Clock Tower on The Greensward. DF pointed out that the fountain still worked.

This was followed by a photograph of Frinton & Kirby Beavers with whom FiB had been working for 11 years on the allotments. DF added that before the Beavers, it had been the Rainbow children and the Brownies.

To round off the presentation, there was a picture of the Anglia in Bloom presentation held in Bury St Edmunds which celebrated another year of the work of the FiB team. DF then thanked the team members and all FiB supporters. The final slide was a shot of last year's Father Christmas taking a tour round the shopping street (with his pixies) and a reminder that this year's Late Night Shopping Event in Connaught Avenue would take place on Friday, 7 December 2018, from 6.00 pm to 8.30 pm.

DF was then congratulated and he received a round of applause.

7 RESIDENTS' ISSUES

Residents raised the following questions (Q):

Q: Over the last number of years, problems have been experienced with tourist parking (in Waltham Way) opposite drives. I have contacted North Essex Parking Partnership regarding this, but have not received a reply, but Giles Watling MP has been good enough to intervene. I have received a letter from Ian Taylor at TDC, stating that we need petitions and lots of letters, but he has had these. I would like something to be placed opposite drives so that we can get in and out of our driveways.

A (Alan Eldret): After speaking to you, I toured around the area and taken note of the situation that you have one white line on the other side of the road. The FRA have been passing your comments on, and I will be particularly passing your request onto our ECC Councillor.

Giles Watling MP agreed to follow up this situation again.

Q: We have had an empty house next to our house for 4-5 years, and cannot understand why it has not been repaired, and/or sold. I suspect that it is being left in a state of disrepair so that it could be an opportunity to redevelop. I am thinking of starting a campaign involving people reporting on the house next door, if there is nothing that can be done about houses such as this. I have even spoken to Councillor Nick Turner about it, and he has driven round and taken a look. However, we understand that there is nothing that we can do.

A (Alan Eldret): The planning situation is such that you will know if they go through planning procedures (if it going to be re-developed). I would like to talk to you afterwards.

Giles Watling MP also suggested that the resident got in touch with him and he would get a case worker onto it.

Councillor Terry Allen pointed out that TDC had taken over an empty house (in a poor condition) in Clacton via compulsory purchase and it was possible that they could do it again.

Q: There is a growing problem of graffiti along the seafront and on the signage.

Giles Watling MP agreed to follow this up.

Q: There is an area of really dangerous potholes at the end of Audley Way and at the junction with Central Avenue.

It was explained that Councillor Robert Bucke (RB) was taking up this issue and that an article had appeared recently in the Gazette. RB pointed out that the concrete road was laid in the 1930s and it was corroded. He wanted to enforce ECC to adopt this road and he had discovered that the Government had issued a paper that stated that if you could establish that it was a highway, it had to be adopted. He was now in the process of discussing with the Town Council whether or not those roads could be designated a highway.

Q: The standard of road surface in Norwood Way is appalling. I believe that if the Council does not have the money to carry out adequate repairs, the Government should be told (by ECC) either give us the money or we will declare ourselves bankrupt.

A (Alan Eldret): The FRA are lobbying our ECC Councillors on repairs to potholes.

The Chairman concluded the meeting by stating that the Frinton Residents' Association's Secretary took down details of all the questions raised by residents and the FRA acted on them. He added that the FRA would like to know if residents would like specific subjects on the Agenda (of future meetings), adding "Please do let us know as it is your Association and these are your meetings".

8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman then read out some advice provided by the PCSOs, one of whom would be available after the meeting to speak to residents regarding any personal concerns.

"With the dark nights, winter and Christmas fast approaching, can residents be mindful to make sure they lock all their vehicles, and take items of value out of them. At home, leave a light on if you are going out and expecting to come home in darkness or if you work away during the day, buy a timer switch that will turn a light on at a set time. Outside lighting is always a good thing to have. This can also activate during the night if someone is approaching your property. If you own a business make sure all tills are emptied at closing time and leave the till drawer open so suspects can see that all money has been removed."

9 DATE OF NEXT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

It was pointed out that the next FRA public meeting would be the AGM to be held from 10.00 am on 6 April 2019 in the McGrigor Hall, Fourth Avenue, Frinton-on-Sea.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending the meetings, especially the Councillors who had turned up.